

Message Text

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72

ACTION ARA-20

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT, CO

SUBJECT: ALBERTO LLERAS ENDORSES ALFONSO LOPEZ

UNCINCSO FOR POLAD

1. THE PARTICIPATION IN A SEPTEMBER 15 LIBERAL PARTY RALLY OF FORMER PRESIDENT ALBERTO LLERAS CAMARGO HAS SIGNIFICANTLY STRENGTHENED LIBERAL PARTY UNITY AND SMOOTHED THE WAY FOR LIBERAL CANDIDATE ALFONSO LOPEZ MICHELSEN.

2. ALBERTO LLERAS, LONG A PERSONAL AND POLITICAL ENEMY OF ALFONSO LOPEZ, JOINED THE CANDIDATE AND PARTY DIRECTOR TURBAY AT A RALLY IN THE NEARBY CUNDINAMARCA TOWN OF CHIA WHERE LLERAS LIVES. LIBERAL LEADERS HAVE WORKED FRANTICALLY BEHIND THE SCENES FOR SEVERAL WEEKS TO BRING ABOUT THIS DISPLAY OF UNITY, WHICH WAS NECESSARY TO DISPEL RUMORS THAT LLERAS WOULD SOMEHOW SABOTAGE LOPEZ CAMPAIGN, ALBERTO LLERAS WORDS AND ACTIONS CARRY GREAT WEIGHT AMONG INFLUENTIAL

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COLOMBIANS AND HIS PUBLIC ADHERENCE TO LOPEZ

CANDIDACY REPRESENTS AN IMPORTANT STEP FOR THE CANDIDATE.

3. LLERAS, IN HIS REMARKS, LEFT LITTLE DOUBT OF HIS INTENTION TO BACK THE LOPEZ CANDIDACY. WEARING A CAMPAIGN BUTTON THAT READ "I AM A LOPISTA", LLERAS STATED THAT THERE IS ONLY ONE LIBERAL PARTY CANDIDATE. THE TASK AT HAND, HE SAID, IS TO WIN THE ELECTION AND TO DO SO WITH A MARGIN SUFFICIENTLY AMPLE TO ALLOW LOPEZ TO GOVERN EFFECTIVELY.

4. LLERAS APPEARANCE ON THE DIAS, IN EFFECT, REDEEMED HIS PLEDGE OF LAST YEAR TO BACK LOPEZ IF THE LATTER WERE TO BECOME THE LIBERAL PARTY NOMINEE. LLERAS ACTIONS ALSO DEMONSTRATED HIS READINESS TO PRACTICE THE PARTY UNITY THAT HE HAS, IN THE PAST, DESCRIBED AS AN ELEMENT ESSENTIAL FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE LIBERAL PARTY.

5. THE STRIKING DISPLAY OF LIBERAL UNITY ON SATURDAY ALSO HAD THE EFFECT OF UPSTAGING SOMEWHAT THE FRIDAY EVENING NOMINATION (SEPTEL) OF ALBRO GOMEZ HURTADO BY THE CONSERVATIVE CONVENTION. IT ALSO DAMPENED CONSIDERABLY THE HOPES OF CONSERVATIVES THAT LOPEZ WOULD FAIL TO GET THE SUPPORT OF THE LIBERAL PANTHEON THAT INCLUDES COUSINS ALBERTO AND CARLOS LLERAS. NOW THAT ALBERTO HAS SWALLOWED HIS ANIMOSITY IN THE INTERESTS OF PARTY UNITY, THE RUMOR MILL WILL CONCENTRATE ON CARLOS LLERAS REPUTED DESIRE TO DO IN LOPEZ AND LAUNCH HIS OWN CANDIDACY.
WHITE

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